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UNCLAS HARARE 002444

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PD, AF/S, AF/RA, AF/PDPA
NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: DAILY NEWS CRITICIZES POLITICAL USE OF FOOD
AID

¶1. Under headline "SADC ministers must act to avert disaster" the independent daily "The Daily News" dedicated its November 8 editorial to criticizing the government of Zimbabwe for politicizing the distribution and purchase of much-needed maize-meal in the country. The editorial also called on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to "exert" pressure on the government of Zimbabwe in order to "avert a looming humanitarian crisis." Excerpts:

¶2. "Recent developments in which ZANU PF has demanded membership cards from hungry rural and urban dwellers only serve to strengthen the need for international pressure to ensure non-governmental organizations are allowed direct participation, in order to save millions of Zimbabweans from starvation. Villagers in Binga, Insiza, and urban dwellers in Budiriro, Chitungwiza, Kuwadzana, Mufakose and Warren Park have in the past week been required to produce membership cards of the ruling party before being allowed to buy maize-meal. This is the most callous conduct anyone can ever imagine from a government. . . This is one example of how a government has deliberately plotted to wage a war against its own citizens for daring to exercise their right to belong to a party of their choice. It is because the government no longer listens to anyone, internally, that pressure from outside should be applied in order to avert an imminent humanitarian crisis. . . That a government can sanction the starvation of hundreds of thousands of people because they differ politically is reprehensible, disgraceful and horrendous. . . Pressure must be exerted on the government to avert a looming humanitarian crisis. . ."

SULLIVAN